

GENERAL ORDERS, }
No. 106. }

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, April 28, 1863.

1. A Board of five Officers (the Signal Officer and a Medical Officer of the Army being members) will be assembled in this city for the examination of officers now on Signal duty in the Army of the Potomac, the Middle Department, and the Departments of Washington and Virginia; and thereafter, such persons as may be authorized by the Secretary of War to report to the Board for examination as candidates for commissions in this Corps. The same Board will examine enlisted men of the signal parties on duty in the Department of Washington, and such other candidates for enlistment in, or transfer to, the Corps, as may be brought before it.

2. As soon as practicable, the Colonel and the two Majors authorized by the act of March 3, 1863, shall be appointed.

3. Immediately after the appointment of the Majors of the Signal Corps, auxiliary examining Boards, in each of which one of the Majors and a Medical Officer of the Army shall be members, will be appointed, for the examination of the officers now on Signal duty in the Army Corps and Departments of the South and West; and thereafter, such other persons as may be authorized by the Secretary of War to report for examination as candidates for commission.

4. The Commander of each Army Corps or Department in which the employment of Signal parties is now, or may be, authorized, will immediately appoint a Board of their officers, two of whom shall be officers now on Signal duty, and the third a Medical Officer, for the examination of enlisted men now on Signal duty who are candidates for transfer to, or enlistment in, the Signal Corps; and, if necessary to complete the organization of the Signal parties in their command, such other persons as they may authorize to report for examination as candidates for enlistment. If the Army Corps forms a part of an Army, then orders will be subject to the approval of the Commanding General of that Army.

5. The Board instituted by the 1st section will hold its sessions in the city of Washington, will adjourn from time to time according to the business before it, and be reassembled by the order of its President.

It will call before it the officers to be examined by requisitions upon the Commanding Generals of the Armies or Departments in which they are serving; but, in order that no inconvenience to the service shall result, these requisitions shall be subject to the discretion of the Commanding General as to the time and order in which the officers called for shall report, care being taken that the officers to be withdrawn shall be replaced in advance, as far as practicable, by others who have passed satisfactory examinations.

6. The Boards instituted by section 3 will report in succession at the Headquarters of the Army, Army Corps, or Departments in the Districts to which they may be assigned, and will be subject to the discretion of the Commanding Generals as to the time and place of meeting, and the order in which candidates are to be examined.

7. Examining Boards will be governed by the following rules:

First. Candidates for commissions shall be examined upon Reading, Writing, Composition, and Arithmetic; Elementary Chemistry, and the elementary branches of Natural Philosophy, Surveying, and Topography; the use and management of Field Signals and Field Telegraphs; and those who have served in the Acting Corps, upon the mode of conducting Signal parties in the field, and in the presence of the enemy, and upon rendering the proper papers and reports.

Second. Candidates for warrants shall be examined upon Reading, Writing, Geography, and Arithmetic.

Third. No person shall be recommended for appointment or enlistment in the Signal Corps who is not of good moral character, and physically competent for the duties.

Fourth. The several examining Boards will adopt such forms of proceeding in questions upon the different branches of education enumerated above, or employ such other methods of ascertaining the merits of the different candidates as may seem expedient, having due reference to their mental and physical qualifications.

8. The principal and auxiliary examining Boards will make to the Secretary of War, through the Signal Officer, weekly reports of the examinations made by them, designating by name, regiment, age, nativity, &c., of the persons examined, the grade for which they are recommended, and their recent standing, as determined by the examination, and by their record of service. In the case of the auxiliary Boards

directed by sections 3 and 4, these reports will be transmitted through the Commanding Generals of the Army or Department in which the examinations were made.

9. As soon as the examinations of the auxiliary Boards have been completed, a revising Board, constituted as directed in the first section, with the addition of the Majors who were members of the Boards directed by the third section, will assemble in this city for the purpose of reviewing the action of the several examining Boards; determining the relative standing of the officers of each grade; the rules to be observed in the appointments to the grade of First and Second Lieutenants; the classification of enlisted men; and making such other recommendations as may have been suggested by observation and experience as essential to a perfect organization of the Corps.

10. Until the reports of the revising Board have been approved by the Secretary of War, the appointments in the Signal Corps will be limited to the Colonel and the two Majors, one Captain, two First Lieutenants, and four Second Lieutenants for each Army Corps or Department in which Signal parties have been or may be authorized; and the enlistments or transfers, to one Sergeant, two Privates of the first class, and four Privates of the second class. The appointments thus made to be temporary; and the permanent standing of the Officers to be determined by the action of the President, upon the recommendations of the reviewing Board.

11. In order to facilitate as much as possible the organization of the Corps, the Commanders of Army Corps and Departments are authorized to transfer enlisted men, now employed on Signal duty who have passed satisfactory examinations, to the Signal Corps, copies of the muster and descriptive rolls of the men so transferred being sent to the Headquarters of the Corps in this city; and the Chief Signal Officers in each Army Corps or Department, are authorized to complete the Signal parties under their charge by the enlistment of a sufficient number of approved candidates: *Provided*, That all officers and men now on Signal duty, who may fail to pass satisfactory examinations, shall be returned to their regiments; and any officers and men retained in the service under the provisions of War Department General Orders, No. 92, who, in like manner, fail to pass satisfactory examinations, shall at once be discharged from the service of the United

ates by the Commander of the Army or Department in which they are serving.

12. The Chief Signal Officer in an Army Corps or Department is authorized to appoint, upon the recommendation of the examining Board, and subject to the approval of the Colonel of the Corps, the Sergeants authorized for the parties under his charge, and, upon a like recommendation and approval, to designate the privates of the first and second classes.

13. Recruiting for the Signal Corps will be conducted under the rules prescribed for the regimental recruiting service. Enlistments will be made for the period of three years, or during the war; but enlisted men now on duty in the Signal Corps may re-enlist for the period of one or two years, and will be entitled to the benefits provided by the 18th section of the act of Congress approved March 3, 1863.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.